eVA Interface and Integration Design Team – Import/Export Group

Meeting Minutes for
November 20, 2003

Opening:
A meeting of the eVA import/export interface workgroup was called to order at 10:00 AM on 11/20/2003 in Richmond.

Present:

Debbie Adams, DMV (phone)	Andy Kmett, VCE (phone)
Mary Baker, DMME (phone)	Marion Lancaster, DGS
Regina Baxter, SVTC (phone)	Joy Lazarus, DMHMRSAS (phone)
Richard Brough, DSS	Parvin Mirshahi, DGS
Jan Fatouros, DGS	Dan Rogerson, ODU (phone)
Martha Freeland, DMV (phone)	

A. **Approval of Agenda**
   The informal agenda:
   1 – Recap/Summary Interface Meeting (Congratulations! You are done!)
   2 – Current eVA team work status
   3 – What's next?

B. **Recap/Summary of Interface Design Team**
   The participants in the Interface Design Team have done a wonderful job working with the eVA team on the interface design. The eVA team thanks all participants for contributing ideas and ensuring a successful interface design between agency systems and eVA. The group has been instrumental in designing an interface that will allow purchase order related data to be imported into eVA and/or exported from eVA regardless of technology platform. Most agencies that were interested in interfacing have completed implementation and the interface processing is part of their normal routine. There are a few agencies finishing, starting or planning their interface effort, but the design is complete from the eVA perspective. Congratulations and thank you! You are done!

C. **Current eVA team work status**
   - HOLDING TANK - The project to incorporate the order data imported into eVA that could not be sent to the eMall (Holding Tank data, aka non-eVA data) is in the testing stage. This effort will include the programming to move this data into the data warehouse on a going forward basis as well as moving the data from the very first interface run. Existing reports will be modified to include a run-time parameter to select whether to include eMall data only, non-eVA data only (holding tank data), or both sets of data.

     The interface design team decided earlier that the implementation of moving the holding tank data to the data warehouse will not impact their current production processing. However, some agencies, such as the Dept. of Mines, Minerals, and Energy have requested that a test export file be sent to them for testing prior to implementation. The export file will have both eMall data and non-eVA data

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(Holding Tank data). Implementation is expected in December or January. An email will be sent to the interface design team in advance of the actual implementation date.

- PO SUMMARY EXPORT interface - AMS has provided a view of the PO Header data and the PO Commodity Line data to Biztalk. The eVA team will be able to provide purchase order summary data to agencies through the message broker. Although some agencies provided requests for additional Viador reports they would like for the eVA team to provide, there have been no agency requests for a PO Summary export file.

- CATALOG DATA EXPORT interface - AMS is planning on providing a view of the D_Catalog table to Biztalk. AMS expects to implement this into production by the end of December. The eVA team will then be able to provide catalog data to agencies through the message broker. Some agencies expressed interest in catalog data in the future, but do not have any specific requests at this time. A primary decision point is selecting which catalog data agencies may want since there is a large volume of data (millions of catalog items).

- SWAM VENDOR DATA EXPORT interface - The interface group agreed that the best solution for providing vendor SWAM information is to add SWAM columns at the end of the existing vendor file that is provided through Biztalk. By adding columns at the end, the implementation will not affect existing agency programming. AMS is working on the details with the eVA team. An email will be sent to the interface design team in advance of implementation.

- DELETED VENDOR DATA interface - AMS is planning on providing a view to Biztalk of deleted vendor information. The agencies requested a file identical to the format of the current vendor file provided through Biztalk that will only include vendors that have been "deleted" from the eMall. AMS is working out the details with the eVA team. An email will be sent to the interface design team in advance of implementation.

D.   What's next?

With the interface design work complete, the group agreed that there is no longer a need to meet on interface issues on a weekly or monthly basis. Agencies that are working on the testing and implementation of an interface or agencies that have interface questions can work directly with Maria Hatcher, the lead analyst for eVA interfaces. Emails will be sent out to the group in advance of the implementation of incorporating non-eVA data (holding tank) into the data warehouse and the implementation of improvements to the vendor data exported from Biztalk. If the eVA team discovers interface issues that warrant group discussion, the eVA team will contact the group to schedule a meeting.

A question was raised with the group as to whether a monthly meeting should be established for technical issues other than interfaces, such as search performance, etc. The group thought that most of those issues could be handled in the eVA user group meetings.

Dan Rogerson, from ODU, asked about the design for integration. The eVA team will work with one ERP group at a time on integration. The first ERP to be considered will be SCT Banner. Other groups may be formed from there based on interest and resources. We are expecting the integration to be generalized at the AMS level with any required ERP customizations handled at the Biztalk level.

There was also a question about eVA payment processing for ERP agencies. The assumption is that payments must go back through the ERP to be sent to CARS. Preliminary discussions have started with Dept. of Accounts. If payment processing were to be added to eVA, the CARS only agencies would be handled first before determining what is best for agencies with ERPs. The eVA team would need to call the interface design group back together to work out the details if major new functionality that affects interfaces is introduced.

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There was discussion about reporting from eVA. In the next phase of the data warehouse, there will be better capabilities for reporting performance measures, such as delivery times (if receiving is entered in eVA), approval times, etc. The group discussed the idea of agencies using the Viador reporting tool to create their own reports. There are administration and licensing issues with the Viador product that would need to be resolved. AMS is looking towards a different reporting tool in the future, such as Business Objects. The group felt that the need for a reporting tool is a bigger issue than just eVA. An enterprise-wide tool is needed to report from all state-wide systems, such as CARS, PMIS, etc. The group thought this need would be better solved at a different level, such as at VITA. The eVA team suggested that a small workgroup could be formed to deal with agencies creating their own reports from eVA and/or to define performance based reports that the eVA team could provide. The group was encouraged to send a list of people to Marion Lancaster who would be interested in participating in a work group.

The group was asked to consider whether they felt like there should be a large technical group meeting on a quarterly basis, create special technical interest groups that would be coordinated by one of the eVA technical team members, or form special technical interest groups within the eVA user group meetings.

A meeting will be scheduled with the interface design group for the third Thursday of February, February 19, to discuss the best approach going forward.

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